

76 A LETTER from a General Officer to a Colonel, and several Officers and Soldiers
under King JAMES, now in the present Service.

I Must own (noble Gentlemen and Fellow-Soldiers) that I was one of those who were misled as well as you, by the Apprehensions that our Religion was in danger, had not the Prince of O. come opportunely to redeem us. But I can upon my Salvation say (and I hope so may many of us) I had no other Design in closing with his Troops, but only to have obtained a free Parliament, and such Laws as would have secured our Religion and Property, which was pretended then to be invaded. It never entered into my Thoughts, neither had I the least Suspicion, that the Prince aimed to *destroy his Father*, or to *embroil* us in such an *Expensive War*, to the utter impoverishment of our Country. 'Tis true, we Soldiers are not usually Politicians; and therefore could not so easily pierce into the hidden Intentions of *ambitious Men*; but we have so much Sense as to remember how kind a Master K. James was to us; how duly he paid us, and yet never sought a Penny from the Country for it: Whereas now, though in all our Quarters we hear nothing but Complaints, of *want of Trade*, *scarcity of Money*, and *excessive Taxes*, yet you know how ill *We* are paid: *We*, who have undergone as much Fateague in Ireland as ever Army did: *We*, who with the Expence of so much Blood, Poverty, Hunger, Fatigue and Sickness, have reduced that Kingdom; find now so little Regard had for us, that instead of a Recompence we can neither get Cloaths, nor Money, nor Horses, for those that we lost in Service; and are forced to oppress our native Country for meer Subsistence. It repents me at my Soul, that we took so much Pains there to expel so good a King and Master, from a Country which was only left him for his Shelter; which shews we fought for Fighting-sake, without reflecting on the Justice of the Cause, or the Consequences of such a Victory.

Now, methinks, our Eyes ought to be opened; for my part I can foresee nothing but an inevitable Ruin to our Country, if we persevere to resist our *gracious, indulgent Master*. The Scene of War must be translated from Flanders hither, and then my heart will bleed to think what Miseries our poor Country must endure. We have seen, felt, and contributed to the Fate of poor *distressed, desolate Ireland*; but alas! your *Pampered Island*, as it is less used to Sufferings, will find smaller Sufferings more intollerable, and yet must suffer much more than they have done, if we repent not in time, and welcome back our Sovereign. It seems he has taken a Resolution to come with a considerable Force of his own Subjects, intermixt with Strangers, to recover his Right; it behoves us then to consider seriously, Why *We* should oppose him? can *We* expect any pay from our present Riders (I call them so, who make us like so many tame Allies bear every Burthen) when most of the Nations Money is sent to support the Confederates? Have *We* not found, by *woful Experience*, that none are looked upon, preserved, or paid, but *Danes, Brandenburgers*, and our *Hogen Mogen Dutch*, and that *We* English men can get no Advancement, unless by the Interest of these *Foreigners*? You see how far *We* are from being trusted in our native Country, where *We* might be merciful in our defence of it, and spare the *Stores, the Wealth, and blood* of our Friends and Relations; when *We* must all be driven on *Ship-board* (though 'tis contrary to the Laws of England, there being now no Martial Law in) which occasioned many of our *low-Soldiers* to shoot at their own Comrades for only desiring their Pay, and sent to fight the Confederates Quarrel in Flanders, to make room for *Twenty thousand Foreigners*, who are now about to be purchased with our very Pay, at no less rate than *five hundred and fifty thousand Pounds*, to come and harass our Country, and destroy and burn what they cannot defend, that if they cannot, their Enemies also may not be better for it, but the Country desolate. Whereas we know K. James has a true English Soul, and a true compassionate Tenderness for his Country. All he desires is Liberty to All, that All may live in Peace and Plenty; whilst K. W. sets his whole mind to support the Dutch, to make them our Masters, and give away our Bread and Traffique from us.

Let us then it last be *English-men*, Lovers of our Country, and of our lawful, kind, and bountiful King, and nothing will be wanting to us. We shall have Honour, Peace, and Plenty, but above all a Quiet Conscience, if we return to our Duty, and save our native Country from ruin and desolation. You cannot but see the Country desires, and justly deserves it at our hands. They expect, that as we were the first who gave the Prince of O. this Advantage to rule us with a Rod of Iron, and lay away our Gold and Silver amongst his *Foreigners*; so we should be the first to assist K. James to return without a Bloodshed. He has many Friends, and every Day gains him more; and however we may fool our selves with the vain hopes of K. W. carrying us into the heart of France, and keeping up the Confederacy, neither the one, nor the other, can succeed. France is too strong for us to attack it; and the Confederacy too weak to subsist much longer. It must break, and if now we should be so Barbarous to oppose our old Master, then he will be able to come with much more Force than we can resist; and we shall neither have the Credit, nor the Comfort of being instrumental to such a Blessing.

Let us therefore at his first Appearance shew our selves true English-men, own our King, own our Laws, own our Country and Religion, and not fight Dutch Quarrels to make our selves the Laughing Stock of all Nations; or as fo in the midst of so clear a Light, could not see our own, and our Nations Interest.

I write not out of any Discontent. I have had as much Favour from K. W. as any other Officer. I have not been dealt with as my Lord Marlborough, or my Lord Torrington, or any of those other English Officers who were and Imprisoned (we are certain) for no other Reasons, but to prefer Strangers to their Commands, and it may truly be our Fate: But I have a true Sense and Feeling of the Miseries our Country must suffer, if we oppose our lawful King, which must cause more and more Supplies to be sent on both sides, and so make our Country an *Academy of Blood*; whereas we now of the *Soldiery*, if we have honest English Hearts, may turn the Scale, make our selves and all our Posterity happy, and restore Peace and Plenty to old England, and have all our Arrears paid us by K. James truly loves his Country, and its Peace and Welfare, and ever was the best Master to his Soldiers of any Prince in Europe; and we may be assured that whatever *Foreigners* our true and lawful King brings in (if we shew ourselves just and Loyal) will soon be honourably Dismissed, and *We* employed to regain our Trade, and repair the Losses this Dutch Stratagem hath brought upon us. K. W. is wholly theirs, and they for themselves: Why should *We* be for our selves, as our King is for us. If we joyn as Brethren, and honest English-men, we need not fear ambitious or Self-ended Courtiers, nor Dutch Councils. We have the Countries Hearts and Wishes, and they will fully assist us for freeing them from endless Taxes, and still growing Miseries.

Noble Friends, and Fellow-Soldiers in Arms; I write not this but upon most serious Deliberation, not only with myself but with the best of our Companions, and the most Eminent amongst the Nobility and Gentry of England, who heartily concur with me in their Wishes, and will also concur with us with their Lives and Fortunes, if we acquit ourselves like honest true English-men, and Lovers of our Country. Which with them, and (I hope) with you, I resolve to do, to the utmost of my Power, who am, Noble Gentlemen, and Fellow-Soldiers, Yours in all Sincerity.

